



dFs News

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Summer 2011

SELF ADVOCACY WORKSHOP

By Courtney Lakatos, RPS

Diversified Family Services hosted a workshop entitled “We Have Human Rights” on March 29, 2011 at the Hermitage Fire Hall. This workshop was geared towards individuals with developmental disabilities. The workshop was aimed at presenting the tools and techniques to assist the participants in self advocacy. Assisting the participants in developing self advocacy skills is essential in assisting people towards independence.

In 2007, the United Nations passed a law stating that people with disabilities have the same rights as everyone else. This law was called the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This law was created to protect people’s rights, enforce existing laws, and educate the public. “We must forever keep to our own ideal and pursuit and continue making fresh efforts for the advancement of people with disabilities.” This quote was by Deng Pufang; founder of numerous advocacy and public assistance agencies in China. Pufang was awarded the United Nations Human Rights Prize in 2003 for his work in protecting the rights of the disabled.

This workshop provided the individuals in attendance with the information that they have rights that protect their basic human dignity, their bodies, and what they do at home. They learned that they have the right of equality, the right to be treated as equal citizens. They have the right to safety, the right to be free from violence and abuse. They expressed that they have the right to home and family, to be a part of one and to start one. All individuals have the right to privacy, no matter where they live.

Diversified Family Services strives to ensure that the individuals who receive our services have the “Every Day Experience”. Individuals who receive this service are provided with the skills to help them successfully and fully integrate into their community. This workshop emphasized that inclusion in the community is a right these individuals have. Every person has the right to live independently, earn a paycheck, to receive the best possible health care, to vote and the right to be educated. Education is one of the greatest ways to protect yourself. Ropo Oguntimehin was quoted saying, “Education is a companion which no future can depress, no crime can destroy, no enemy can alienate it and no nepotism can enslave”.

The individuals who attended this workshop seemed to be motivated by the material presented and many shared stories about standing up and speaking out. The response was so favorably overwhelming that the group is planning to develop a self advocacy circle. A meeting date will be announced in the near future.

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Growth in Community Employment

by: Jennifer Minett, BA/TAAS



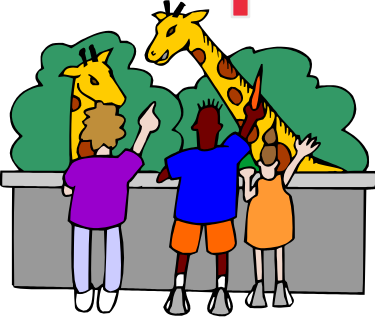
Community Employment through **dFs** has grown in many aspects. We currently have 9 individuals maintaining employment within the community. Some are utilizing job coaching services while others are maintaining part time employment on their

own. Our transitional work crew is continuously

growing. We currently have 7 contracted sites operating daily to help the individuals gain knowledge of working skills while earning a pay check. These sites are throughout Mercer County. We are exploring the addition of more sites to further assist individuals in gaining competitive employment skills.



Trip to the Zoo



Community Awareness has planned for a trip to the Cleveland Zoo. All individuals who receive any service from Diversified Family Services are welcome to come. More information will be available within the next few weeks. Please contact your **dFs** caseworker with any questions.

By Courtney Lakatos, RPS



2011 Exemplary Employer Award

By Jennifer Minett, TAAS

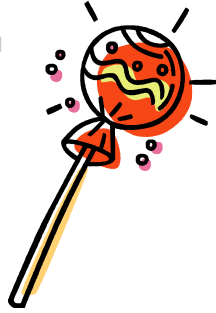
Ken Robertson from the Sharpsville Borough was nominated by **dFs** for a 2011 Employment 1st Pennsylvania Employer Award. This award is given by Networks for Training and Development to those employers who utilize job accommodations for persons with disabilities. Congratulations Ken on receiving Honorable Mention, and thank you for the support you provide to **dFs** and our Community Employment program.

**IN MEMORY OF
BEVERLY DEWOLF
(1942-2011)
SHE WILL BE SADLY MISSED**



CLIENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

By Tiffany Johnson, RPS



The Client Advisory Committee is sponsoring a lollipop drive to continue raising money for our agency-wide activities. The sale began in March and within just a few weeks 193 lollipops have already been sold. We welcome all the support in making this a successful drive. Please see committee members, (April B., Marilyn, Russell, Bob or Tina) or at the front desk to purchase your “pops”



The top sellers are:

- ✓ Maui Mango
- ✓ Tropical Splash
- ✓ Pina Colada
- ✓ Sweet Freedom
- ✓ Banana Split
- ✓ Caribbean Delight

"Star" of the Month

Contributed by: Stacey Llewellyn, Personnel Assistant

★ Debbie Marks, SSA was selected as February’s “Star of the Month.”

★ The “Star of the Month” for March was Computer Operator, Melissa Flickinger.

★ RPW, Jennifer Ketcham, was selected as April’s “Star of the Month”.

★ Driver, Joe Hilko, was selected as May’s “Star of the Month”.

A certificate was placed in the office waiting area in honor of each “star.” Each “star” receives a token of appreciation. In addition, each “star’s” name was added to the “Star of the Month” plaque that is located on the “dFs Wall of Fame.”

Congratulations to all recipients of this award!

PLEASE WELCOME OUR NEW EMPLOYEES

Direct Care Professionals

Anna Boyer
Vanessa Cimmento
Rebecca Davies
Denise Edwards
Lynda Grande

Sherry Hartman
Rhonda Koser
Ashley McFarland
Jenira Owens
Peggy Owens

Emmanuel Simpson
Summer Small
Melissa Townsend
Sandy Woods

Visit our website www.diversifiedfamily.org

LOCKED IN---LET'S PARTY---LET LOOSE



Jokers

Paling around



Love is in the Air



Name Game



Music Rocks





Lights Out



Day Dreaming



Hanging Out and Monkeying Around



Dance to the Music



Recovering from a night of fun!



Healthy Homemade SUMMERTIME Fun!!

By: Stacey Cannon, HSC

Hot summer days are around the corner and after this past snowy winter and rainy spring; it sure will be a welcome sight. As temperatures increase, staying healthy and hydrated is important. With high food and gas prices, consumers are watching their budget more closely than before and for those that like to stay away from processed foods and unhealthy beverages, here are some very economical natural healthy recipes to try this summer. I hope you like them and have a safe summer!



Homemade Sports Drink

1 pk of unsweetened Koolaid Mix (Pick your favorite flavor envelope)
2 quarts of water
½ cup of sugar (for less calories, use less or artificial sweetener)

½ tsp of salt
½ cup of orange juice.
Mix thoroughly and refrigerate.

Electrolyte Replacement

1 cup water
1 Tbsp of Orange Juice or 2 Tsp of lemon juice
1 Tbsp of sugar

1 pinch of salt
Mix thoroughly and refrigerate.

Basic Sweet Tea

Heat 6 tea bags in 2 cups water until brought to a boil.
Immediately remove from heat.
Add ½ to 1 cup of sugar depending on your taste buds

Mix sugar until dissolved and let stand 5-10 minutes
Remove tea bags.
Pour hot tea into a pitcher add 6 cups of ice cold water.
Add sliced lemon and enjoy.

Public Education Series

By Carol Medford, Program Specialist



In honor of March being National MR/DD Awareness Month, Diversified Family Services hosted the first part of a Public Education Series for persons with Intellectual Disabilities and their families. On March 24th, several people gathered to hear Audra Kosmowski, a lawyer from the **df**s Board of Directors, speak about guardianship issues, estate planning, wills, and trust funds. Unfortunately due to Federal funding cuts, the Social Security office speaker was unable to present his session on benefits scheduled for April 28th.

These programs have been well received by those in attendance. If you would like to participate as well, there is one more event left in the series. The final presentation will be given by Sue Formichella and Jeanette Tarnoci from the Mercer County Behavioral Health Commission on May 26th at 7:00pm at the **df**s main office. They will be speaking on access to services for persons with Intellectual Disabilities. For more information, contact Carol Medford at 724-346-2123, ext. 5559.

First Reverse Raffle a Soaring Success

By Andrea Davidson, Board Secretary

Over **\$7,600** was raised at the first Reverse Raffle held by Diversified Family Services. Approximately 140 guests attended on April 13th at The Corinthian, downtown Sharon. A special raffle for a hot air balloon ride for two people was advertised and drew a great deal of interest. In addition to the buffet dinner and raffle for the grand prize of \$1,000, the evening included a Silent Auction with 45 items, 50/50 raffle, BINGO, and a raffle for a money tree loaded with \$200 cash.



Larry Klemens served as Master of Ceremonies and did an outstanding job throughout the evening. According to the rules of the event, ticket holders of the last 10 numbers were presented with an option to split the grand prize contingent upon everyone agreeing. Unanimous agreement to split the prize came when five numbers were left, resulting in those five ticket holders each taking home a \$200 cash prize!

dFs traditionally holds a major fundraiser every two years. The past three events have been the “Celebrity Doodles” auctions held in 2005, 2007, and 2009. The Executive Team approached the board in January with the new idea of the Reverse Raffle. A committee was formed of 15 office staff willing to plan the details. The wonderful success of this event is a result of the hard work of these committee members as well as the tremendous support from our **dFs** Board of Directors, employees, clients and people in the community who provided donations and attended this event.



Proceeds from this year’s fundraiser will benefit the Drop-In Center, which provides a variety of free and low cost activities for individuals. Thank you to all who supported this event!



Steeler quilt handmade by Lorena Shephard was the highest bidding item.



Table with some of the items for the Silent Auction

dFs is now on Facebook: visit us at www.facebook.com/diversifiedfamily

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"Helping Families Since 1985"

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